

METRO

Freeway lanes closed in 3 areas this weekend

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Ronald Cortes / Getty Images

SPORTS

Spurs rally to defeat Thunder

San Antonio overcomes a 23-point deficit. **Page C1**

HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL

Steele tops Brennan 31-3 to advance in playoffs

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O'Connor stays alive, beating Clemens 34-24

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San Antonio Express-News

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Jerry Lara / San Antonio Express-News

Biology majors Alex Cantrell and Jade Evenstad, both 18, hang out at St. Mary's University this week.

GOING 'BIGGER, BOLDER'

St. Mary's seeking \$130M for students, campus

By Lauren Caruba
STAFF WRITER

As St. Mary's University announced a \$130 million capital campaign Friday night, it already had \$105 million in the kitty, including \$1 million or more from each of 24 alumni.

It's the largest such campaign in the school's history, part of the university's bid to become one of the pre-eminent private institutions in the region. The money will go toward everything from constructing new buildings to bolstering student financial aid packages.

University President Thomas Mengler publicly announced the fundraising, dubbed the "Defining Moment Comprehensive Campaign," on Friday at the Marriott Rivercenter.

"This is a big moment for St. Mary's University," Mengler said



Edward A. Ornelas / San Antonio Express-News

St. Mary's University Professor of Management K. Matthew Gilley (from left), university President Thomas Mengler and NuStar Energy Chairman Bill Greehey, a St. Mary's graduate, talk before the announcement of the "Defining Moment Comprehensive Campaign."

in an interview. "This is a really gigantic step for us."

St. Mary's graduates are avid contributors.

"I am proud to have received my degree from St. Mary's because in addition to an outstanding education, the Marianist brothers instilled in me the work ethic and dedication that helped me achieve a successful career," NuStar Energy Chairman Bill Greehey said in a statement. A 1960 alumnus, he is the business school's namesake. "But more importantly, they also taught me that you are never truly a success unless you share your success with others."

Founded in 1852, St. Mary's is the oldest college in San Antonio. The Catholic and Marianist private school currently enrolls around 2,300 undergraduate students and more than 3,600

St. Mary's continues on A13

Canceling STAAR exam may hurt Texas

Federal funding could be halted

By Jacob Carpenter
HOUSTON CHRONICLE

Texas could lose "essentially all" federal funding for public schools — about \$6 billion in the past academic year — if state leaders cancel standardized tests in response to the disruption caused by Hurricane Harvey, Texas Education Commissioner Mike Morath warned.

Some parents and advocates have argued that the tests shouldn't be administered because students are more likely to perform poorly after missing class time and suffering trauma from the hurricane and subsequent flooding. Classes were canceled across the Houston and Gulf Coast region after Harvey, with several districts missing two weeks of instruction. A change.org petition asking state leaders to drop the tests this year has collected about 240,000 signatures.

But Morath told state lawmakers this week that unless the state secures a waiver, skipping the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness, or STAAR, would put Texas in violation of federal law. That would threaten funding from Washington, which accounts for about 10 percent of the state's school funding.

"We don't think a waiver could be or would be granted," Morath said. "There's no precedent for that in federal history."

The comments by Morath and local school leaders reinforce the widespread belief that Texas students will take the state's standardized tests

Schools continues on A11

"There's no precedent for that in federal history."

Texas Education Commissioner Mike Morath, on the state getting a waiver on STAAR exams

Texas Dems' hopes up after others' victories

By Peggy Fikac
AUSTIN BUREAU

AUSTIN — Texas Democrats are drawing hope from wins around the country, but they don't agree on exactly how to apply those election lessons to reverse a losing streak that has left them without a statewide victory here for more than two decades.

Do they run with a hard-left message to stir a Democratic base distraught over actions by President Donald Trump and statewide Republican officials? Or do they present a moderate message to appeal to Republicans who may no longer see themselves reflected in the increasingly far-right GOP?

For Ed Espinoza, executive director of Progress Texas, the

results in Virginia and elsewhere show that Democrats here should "run with a truly progressive message that resonates with workers, with the middle class, with communities of color, with young people."

That means a "rights" message, he said: immigrant rights, reproductive rights, voting rights, and civil rights that encompass the LGBTQ community along with racial and ethnic groups.

"There is no great hunger for Democratic conservatives anywhere right now. I don't even know what that means," Espinoza said. "Part of the problem is we have moderated our message in the past. We have tried to be 'Republican lite.' When you try to be 'Republican Lite,'

Dems continues on A13

Arrests tied to E. Side violence

Gangs linked to drive-by that killed boy, 4

By Guillermo Contreras
STAFF WRITER

Federal authorities on Friday arrested nine suspected gang members whose alleged clash with rivals is blamed for much of the violence on the East Side, including the drive-by shooting of a 4-year-old boy.

The late-night July 19 shooting death of 4-year-old De-Earlion Whitley at his home was in retaliation over a shooting that occurred earlier that day, according to court documents and statements made in court Friday.

The nine arrested Friday are



Marvin Pfeiffer / San Antonio Express-News

Jovon "Lil Jojo" Deante Stewart, 24 (from left); Dai'Vonte E'Shaun Titus Ross, 21; and James "Showtime" Bilal Ali, 34; leave the Federal Courthouse after their arrests.

among 10 indicted Wednesday — one was already in custody — by a federal grand jury on charges of distributing crack cocaine and conspiracy. Among them is the boy's father, Earl "E" Whitley Jr.

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WEATHER

HIGH 80 LOW 45 Windy Full report, C12

TRICENTENNIAL

Building highways has been a battle at times. **Page A12**



365 days of tacos

Nopales and egg, and nopales a la mexicana tacos on flour tortillas at Taurino's. **ExpressNews.com/Tacos**

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